

Testimony Submitted by Elman Rodriguez to the Housing Committee
SB 291: “An Act Concerning Certain Protections for Group and Family Child Care Homes”
Connecticut General Assembly
March 10, 2022

Good afternoon Senator Lopes, Representative Williams, ranking members, and distinguished members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Elman Rodriguez and I work as the Tool Kit Licensing Coordinator at All Our Kin. Before working at All Our Kin I operated a licensed family child care business in Bridgeport. I’m offering testimony in support of SB 291, “An Act Concerning Certain Protections for Group and Family Child Care Homes”.

As the Tool Kit Coordinator at All Our, I am the liaison between the state and family child care providers. I make sure providers are prepared to pass the home inspection required to become licensed by the state of Connecticut.

When providers look to start their home-based child care programs they all have their own dreams and visions. We are here to listen and connect them to resources. It’s more than just licensing support. Some educators have challenges with their landlords. Since working at All Our Kin I’ve personally worked with 5 educators that had to move out of their homes because of their landlords. These educators alone could have offered care to 30 children in Bridgeport.

I worked with an educator whose landlord said she would not be able to open a child care program. This was after she paid her three month deposit and started the process of becoming licensed at that site. I coached her on what to say to her landlord. She assured him that she was going to have insurance and that state regulations only allowed her to care for 6 children. Now she is a successful provider and she is becoming a leader in the city of Bridgeport. However, all of the educators looking to start a family child care program don’t have the support of networks like All Our Kin and staff members like myself.

Many educators are scared to tell their landlords that they plan to earn their income from operating a home-based child care program. Many of them opt to move to another house if their landlord says no. Some educators don’t have the language to explain or advocate for themselves. They say I’m opening a daycare and the landlord thinks that they’re opening a school with a lot more children. Landlords are familiar with child care regulations and requirements so they get scared.

When I owned my program I had to fix an issue in the house. My landlord saw I had some educational materials on the walls and there were tables set up for the children. They asked what I was doing. I had to explain to the landlord and I was scared. I showed him my license and he was accepting. But a lot of the time educators get scared. Some close their programs until they get another home. This leaves working parents without care, providers without employment, and children without the stability they need to grow and develop.

Providers face many obstacles trying to start their business, housing should not be one of them. This is why I'm urging you to support SB 291.

Thank you.

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